

FEATURING BEST PRACTICES OF STATE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Improving Guidelines Lead Target Screening

**Virginia Department of Health
Eastern Shore Health District
implemented this best practice
in June 1999**

*Qualifying under the
Best Practices catalogue*

3 Provide Capabilities
34 Develop resource capabilities
344 Manage improvement and change

Best Practice Summary (how it works, how you measure it)

Beginning in June 1999, the Eastern Shore Health District implemented a new targeted screening program for identifying children at high risk to possible lead exposure, as well as follow-up guidelines for reporting and handling lead specimens and coordinating case management. The project enlisted the involvement of several pediatric and primary care physicians on the Eastern Shore. Four primary care providers were visited and the new screening and follow-up guidelines for lead were presented and explained. The number of children screened per month is measured by questionnaire and the effectiveness of the program is measured by noting the increase in the number of referrals to nursing and environmental health staff.

Impact on the Process Organizational Performance (OUTCOMES)

This program implemented by the Eastern Shore Health District was financed with monies received through the Lead Safe Virginia Program. The District has established a better working relationship with many area providers. Elevated blood lead levels are now reported in a timely manner and the new screening guidelines are being adhered to by all participants. Public education regarding lead has been increased with several public service announcements airing on local radio stations and appearing in local newspapers periodically. Lead poisoning prevention materials have been distributed to families and preschoolers. Hardware stores and local building offices have set up displays for lead poisoning prevention awareness.

Best Practice Qualification

Primary care providers in association with the local health district agree that the new guidelines have increased the number of referrals of children with elevated blood lead levels, thereby increasing the number of environmental assessments. The environmental assessments have increased lead hazard identification and controls and cleaning practices leading to healthier, lead-free children.

For Additional Information

Eastern Shore Health District
Virginia Department of Health
P. O. Box 177
Accomac, VA 23301

Keith C. Privett
(757) 787-5886, Extension 267
kprivett@vdh.state.va.us

Michael L. Margolius, M.D., M.P.H.
(757) 787-5886, Extension 201
mmargolius@vdh.state.va.us